REMARKS

Claims 1-7, 21, 26 and 27 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 21, 26 and 27 are amended. Support for the amendments can be found on page 14, line 19 to page 15, line 4, for example.

Claims 1-7, 21, 26 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over JP 10-171283 (JP '283) in view of Kellie et al. (Kellie), U.S. Patent No. 6,954,607. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

JP '283 and Kellie fail to disclose or suggest the combination of (1) dry toner that is applied to a fixation medium and (2) a fixing roller and a first pressing member that apply to a developer on the fixation medium to be pressed by the first pressing member a temperature not lower than a glass transition point of the developer, as recited in claim 1 and as similarly recited in claims 21, 26 and 27.

As admitted on page 2 of the Office Action, JP '283 fails to disclose the glass transition point of the independent claims. Kellie fails to overcome the deficiencies of JP '283.

Kellie discusses the differences between dry toners and liquid toners (col. 4, line 42 to col. 5, line 5). However, when Kellie discusses the overlapping temperature ranges (col. 9, lines 28-31 and col. 10, lines 28-30), Kellie is using liquid toner. Kellie fails to disclose using dry toner. Kellie thus fails to disclose using a temperature not lower than a glass transition point for dry toner.

Applicant again emphasizes why one skilled in the art would not be motivated to configure the temperature of the first nip area 32 to be higher than a glass transition temperature as recited in claims 1, 21, 25 and 26.

The roller 12 of the first nip area 32 is configured to be a prefusing roller (col. 5, lines 33-37). The role of the prefusing roller 12 is to vaporize the carrier agent included in the

liquid toner. In the apparatus disclosed by Kellie, the toner, after the carrier agent thereof is vaporized at the first nip area 32, is fixed onto the sheet by being heated to the temperature above the glass transition temperature at the second nip area 42. If the liquid toner is heated to the temperature above the glass transition temperature at the first nip area 32, the toner will be dissolved into the carrier agent that has yet been vaporized. The dissolved toner will thus be blurred with the toner fixed onto the sheet, thereby damaging the quality of the printed image.

In addition, if the liquid toner, which is dissolved into the carrier agent that is yet being vaporized, is quickly heated at a temperature higher than the glass transition temperature, the carrier agent is flash boiled and may be spattered. Thus, the quality of the image may be damaged.

Applicant again notes that Kellie never states that the first nip area 32 is at a temperature above a glass transition temperature. Kellie only states that the second nip area 42 is at a temperature above the glass transition temperature.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Scott M. Schulte
Registration No. 44,325

JAO:SMS/sxb

Attachments:
Request for Continued Examination
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: July 16, 2007

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION
Please grant any extension necessary for entry;
Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 15-0461